

# One Hot Mess

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll feel better about yourself. I promise.

Tuesday, September 18, 2018

## The Kavanaugh Circus All Boils Down to One Word: Entitlement

So here's a little thought experiment.

Pretend you were born rich, white, and Christian in post-war America. You attended the best private schools and Ivy League institutions in the country, worked at a series of progressively prestigious jobs, and now you have the chance to reach the absolute pinnacle of your trajectory.

You've planned for this your whole life. Everything you've done has led to this moment. You're about to interview for a lifetime appointment to one of the nine most important jobs in American civic life.

The reason this job is so important is because it has the power to affect a lot of people's lives, and whether you want to admit it to yourself or not, if it's one thing you have and don't want to let go of, it's power. ESPECIALLY power to affect other people's lives. The job also commands respect among the people whose opinions you care about, and you also deserve respect. You know the interview is gonna be grueling, but you're a shoo-in for the gig.

But then something happens.

Some bitch you don't even remember surfaces from the great beyond to tell on you for the usual stuff you did with girls that you don't even remember. (You were also entitled to her body). And yeah you know they dig for skeletons, but you've basically been a Boy Scout and fuck if you're gonna let some drunken antics from 35 years ago ruin everything you've worked so hard for.

You deserve this job. You're ENTITLED to this job. And so you're relieved when your prospective employer--which in theory is the American people but in practice is a bunch of spineless hacks--says they're gonna put your accuser on trial.

Because of course! That's normal for a job interview, right? When an allegation of sexual assault surfaces, doesn't EVERY employer put the accuser under oath instead of saying "Thanks for your time, we're going in a different direction?"

In your world, they do. In your world, you're ENTITLED to a seat on the Supreme Court. That's the only possible explanation for assuming that you still deserve this job, and that the women of America should have to beg two lone female Senators to protect their medical safety and--for the SECOND time--demand that a Supreme Court Justice be held accountable for the actions of his own dick.

That's the world you live in. Must be nice.



One Hot Mess at 11:22 PM

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Tuesday, October 2, 2018

## This is the Letter Hundreds of Alaskan Women Lawyers Who Oppose Kavanaugh Will Be Signing Shortly

Dear Senators:

We are Alaskan women attorneys who work in a variety of settings, including public interest organizations, government agencies, and private practice. Among us are Republicans, Democrats, Nonpartisan, and Undeclared voters. We ask you, as your constituents and as fellow lawyers, to vote against confirmation of Judge Brett Kavanaugh as Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Our opposition to the confirmation of Judge Kavanaugh is not a matter of policy disagreement or political affiliation. As lawyers, our focus is on the Constitution and the law. The ongoing legitimacy and public confidence in our nation's highest Court requires that we hold the Justices who interpret those laws to the very highest standards. Judges in state and federal courts, and the United States Supreme Court in particular, must uphold and promote the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, avoiding even the appearance of impropriety. The rule of law demands nothing less.

The press and some of your fellow Senators have presented the confirmation process as something like a criminal trial. But of course, your critical constitutional role to provide "advice and consent" on the suitability of a judicial nominee should bear no resemblance to that process. The question the Constitution asks you to consider is not whether Judge Kavanaugh could be convicted of a crime, but rather, whether he has demonstrated over the course of his life and his career—including during the confirmation process itself—his suitability to serve for a lifetime on our highest court.

Judge Kavanaugh's conduct during his confirmation hearings fell far short of our standards as citizens and as lawyers. He displayed uncontrolled anger, sarcasm, and open contempt for Senators—particularly female Senators—and he made numerous unapologetically partisan statements. This response to admittedly difficult circumstances exhibited poor judgement and a temperament unsuitable for a Supreme Court justice. His answers to Senators' questions were frequently evasive, incomplete, and combative. This behavior raised serious questions in our minds about his credibility and trustworthiness. His performance diminished public confidence, and our confidence, in his ability to uphold the independence and impartiality of the Court.

Our opposition to Judge Kavanaugh also reflects our deep concern for survivors of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Like far too many of our fellow Alaskans, many of us and many of our clients and others with whom we work professionally are survivors of these traumas. Sexual assault survivors nationwide are watching Judge Kavanaugh's response, and the response of the Senate, to Christine Blasey Ford's sworn allegations of sexual assault. In his testimony, the judge displayed no appreciation that this seat on the Court is much larger than one man and much larger than Dr. Ford and her story. His focus rested entirely on himself and his own outrage; his words and actions were not those of the dedicated public servant this country deserves.

This appointment will affect the legitimacy of the Court in the eyes of legal practitioners and the public for decades to come. We can, and we must, do much better than Brett Kavanaugh. We respectfully urge you to vote "No" when Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation reaches the Senate floor.

Alaska deserves better. The nation deserves better.

*Clarification: I didn't draft this letter. It was drafted by a committee of Alaskan women lawyers opposed to Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation. If you are an Alaskan woman lawyer, you should be receiving an email shortly on this with info on how to sign on. Check your spam folders in case of filtering. Thanks.*

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Monday, September 24, 2018

## I Have a Leaked Diary Entry from 1982 Brett Kavanaugh!

Monday, July 12, 1982

Dear Diary,

Last weekend was totally clutch.

On Sunday, Biff and I took his dad's yacht out for a quick sail on the Potomac and talked about all the slutty co-ed bitches we're gonna bang at Yale this fall. I'll miss my football teammates and boys from Georgetown Prep, but fortunately most of them will be just a train ride away at Harvard. I'll probably see Trey at Head of the Charles.

We're gonna get SO wasted! I'll be sure to pack extra pairs of pink shorts and Izod polo shirts and boat shoes in case I barf on myself. I can't wait to go to my first Skull & Bones meeting and pledge DKE and Truth & Courage (aka Tit & Clit) and carry around flags with girls' panties (No means yes, yes means anal!)

It's a good thing I am SO smart, and also rich. My Daddy has SO much money. I'm also very good at basketball. I'm better than almost every black guy!

Right, Diary?

When I grow up, I will be a Supreme Court Justice. So it's very important that I never smoke weed and become treasurer of the Federalist Society and not get caught watching porn on VHS. Fortunately no one in Congress cares about gang rape and groping and drunk sluts because, well, that house party Saturday night was bodacious.

I don't remember exactly what happened, but I think Kip and I took turns with a few different girls and I'm pretty sure they were blown away by my moves and the size of my junk. I have the biggest penis inside the Beltway!

Right, Diary?

Speaking of belts and D.C., I hope someday to use my intimate knowledge of blow jobs to help impeach a Democratic president for getting one. Like I said, I don't remember exactly what happened last night—hopefully I didn't slip one past the goalie so to speak, but if I did, oh well! That's that whore's problem, right?

With any luck, no one will ever find this diary. (It has a special lock on it). Even if they do, I know all of Daddy's friends on the Senate Judiciary Committee will protect me when the time comes.

Okay, I have to go lift weights with Thatcher and Briggs before some ghetto thug on scholarship tries to dunk on me.

Toodles!

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# One Hot Mess

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Friday, October 5, 2018

## A New Sisterhood and the Meaning of No

Last Saturday night, I received a Facebook message from an Anchorage attorney I didn't know, asking for my personal email address. We had several friends in common and Alaska is a tightknit legal community, so I gave it freely.

Five days later, I was sitting three feet away from Senator Lisa Murkowski at a small conference table in her DC office, looking her squarely in the eye and asking her to please vote her conscience on Brett Kavanaugh.

What happened in between was one of the most intense and memorable civic experiences of my life.

The woman who'd messaged me wanted to write a letter signed by Alaskan women lawyers opposing Kavanaugh's appointment to the Supreme Court, and in order to gather as many signatures as possible, created a Facebook group to begin drafting it. The group quickly began to accumulate members, several of whom subsequently composed a succinct and dispassionate plea to Senator Murkowski to reject this appointment.

Shortly after the group formed, a woman named Susanna—whom I also didn't know and whose husband had passed away only three weeks prior—posted there that the ACLU would be supporting 100 Alaskan women to travel to DC that week to meet with our Senators on Kavanaugh.

I didn't even consider going on the trip. It was late Sunday evening by now, and my family needed me at home the following week. I have a full-time job as the primary income earner in a four-person household. My 10 year-old daughter and 7 year-old son were mired in school and activities; flying all the way to the east coast on such short notice was a non-starter.

But the next morning, the attorney who'd originally emailed me posted that she was going to DC, and urged others to do the same despite their busy lives as lawyers, spouses, and moms.

"Here's what I want for my birthday this year," I texted my husband, and put in for three days of personal leave at work. By 5:00 a.m. Wednesday morning, I was at the Juneau airport on my way to Washington.

Thursday was a whirlwind, and most of us barely ate or slept.

Our group met with Senator Sullivan in the morning and Senator Murkowski in the afternoon. In both meetings, we carefully echoed the points in our letter—which by this time bore the signatures of nearly 400 Alaskan women lawyers—on why we felt Brett Kavanaugh was a grave and irreversible mistake for our nation's highest court. The meeting with Lisa (her small population of constituents often refer to her by her first name) felt especially critical.

We knew she was undecided on Kavanaugh, and for good reason. An Alaska bar member herself, we knew she would absorb the legal and ethical reasons—as opposed to the policy leanings—to vote no on Kavanaugh.

We made the pitch that this wasn't about policy. We hadn't flown down for Neil Gorsuch. It was about the public's faith and integrity in the judiciary itself. It was about credible allegations of sexual assault that arose during an interview for a lifetime job that would affect millions of American lives for a generation, most notably the majority of women who have experienced sexual violence. It was about the applicant's entitled and intemperate response to these allegations, his perjurious answers to questions, his disrespect to a female Senator, his combative demeanor, his conspiratorial rantings, and the naked partisanship and vows for retribution that "what goes around comes around."

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## One Hot Mess: A New Sisterhood and the Meaning of No

Even as I sat at the table, listening to my new sisterhood explain these points with trembling poise, and doing so myself, I was acutely aware of how lucky I was. This was a unique, quiet, and historic moment, and I was immeasurably grateful.

I've been given so many blessings in life. Healthy children and a supportive spouse. Professional mentors and mentees alike. The ability to process my thoughts in writing and entertain people in the process. The recklessness, I suppose, to speak my mind frankly and irreverently about things that matter to me. Loving parents who provided their only child with an education that brought me to this room and enabled me to articulate myself.

Tears streamed down my face in the Senate Gallery during the cloture vote on Friday morning when Senator Murkowski whispered "no" and her vote was confirmed on the roll call. That one word—"no"—meant so much to so many. Because our Senator wasn't just saying "no" on her own behalf to a single nominee.

This was much bigger than one judicial nominee or one woman's assault.

That soft, quiet "no" was heard around the country by millions of women whose own "nos" were and continue to be ignored in college dorms, bedrooms, and workplaces every single day.

That "no" was the denunciation of a culture that silences women and elevates privilege and entitlement over their sworn testimony and bodily integrity.

That "no" was the rejection of the idea—so deeply entrenched that millions of women cheer and promote it against their own interests—that nothing in America deserves more coddling, reverence, and ferocious protection than a wealthy white man's ambition and "reputation."

All throughout my 60-hour trip, I heard supportive words from back home that drowned out the countering jabs of harassment, cruelty, and even my own ample cynicism. And I shared them with my new sisterhood of Alaskan women, most of whom I hadn't met before.

I am leaving Washington knowing that we all said "no" together, even though it feels futile. And that we helped Lisa—acting alone and yet with millions—do the same.



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Sunday, September 16, 2018

## Nothing Will Ever Come of This, Because No One With Any Power Gives a Shit

Reality check: the best predictor of the future is history, and if it's one thing history teaches us, it's that women's bodies don't matter.

Maybe it's a bit cynical to say this out loud, but I also think it's realistic: the sexual assault allegation against a 17 year-old Brett Kavanaugh won't matter one iota to his Supreme Court prospects. Of course, there are 6,878 reasons not to confirm this guy to a lifetime appointment on the United States Supreme Court. But people who think this is one of them are deluding themselves.

Per the [Washington Post](#):

Kavanaugh pinned [Christine Blasey Ford] to a bed on her back and groped her over her clothes, grinding his body against hers and clumsily attempting to pull off her one-piece bathing suit and the clothing she wore over it. When she tried to scream, she said, he put his hand over her mouth. "I thought he might inadvertently kill me," said Ford, now a 51-year-old research psychologist in northern California. "He was trying to attack me and remove my clothing."

YAWN! HUGE IF TRUE?! Not so much. First of all, it's probably NOT true. Okay, wai wai wait . . . it probably IS true, because this isn't even deviant. THIS. IS. NORMALIZED. BEHAVIOR. IN. OUR. SOCIETY.

Wake up.

Every single woman has experienced something along this spectrum. We have come to accept it as normal. We've taught boys to do it and girls to take it. Forget about rape and sexual assault and more obvious forms of wrongdoing to women's bodies. I don't think there is a woman alive who has not felt pressured and coerced or BEEN pressured and coerced into sex, and guess what?

NO ONE CARES. Certainly not anyone who can do anything about this.

Men by and large don't care, and most women don't either. In fact, most women shun other women for suggesting that maybe this shit is not okay, because accepting it's not forces them to take a hard look at their own experiences.

You'll see it all over the internet: are we really going to smear a man's whole career (aka not give him a lifetime appointment to a nine person court that decides everyone's lives) and dare to stand in the way of his blind ambition for ALLEGEDLY groping a girl and making her fear for her life when he was a drunk teen?

BIG FUCKING DEAL!

That's right, folks. Only we as a collective society can decide what a "big deal" is, and we have decided that women's bodies are No Big Deal.™ To the extent they matter at all, they matter only to be legislated and controlled. It's no small irony, then, that Kavanaugh is the justice most likely to at long last inflict the thousandth cut on *Roe v. Wade* that will herald the return of wire-hanger abortions in America.

Don't forget: the same power structure that confirmed Clarence Thomas over Anita Hill's testimony and that gives confessed sexual assailants their careers back after a little time-out in the dunce corner is the very same power structure that elevated Kavanaugh and assembled every Supreme Court before and since.

So if you're waiting on this to matter, I'm sorry to say you'll likely be waiting forever.

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California professor, writer of confidential Brett Kavanaugh letter, speaks out about her allegation of sexual assault

washingtonpost.com

Posted by [One Hot Mess](#) at 2:58 PM



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# One Hot Mess

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll feel better about yourself. I promise.

Friday, September 28, 2018

## It Feels Extra Bad Being a Woman Lawyer This Week

I love being a lawyer, which isn't something you hear lawyers say very often.

I've been a lawyer for a long time. Long enough to be confident but not too confident. Long enough to mentor many newer lawyers and law students. Long enough to have made my share of mistakes and had some sweet victories, too.

I love to problem-solve within the framework of statutes, regulations, and the constitution. I love helping my clients and I love doing pro bono work for causes I care about in my free time. I love how the law provides a rational model for problem-solving, and the way it teaches you to think. I love working with my brilliant colleagues (many of them women) and also many kind and wonderful men.

But there's no doubt that practicing law is still very much a man's game, if not overtly then certainly implicitly. I can cite a million examples of how this manifests itself, but I don't have the energy to catalogue or describe them all. And honestly, I'm too afraid to anyway.

Which I think is why the Kavanaugh debacle feels extra depressing and raw.

His juvenile, entitled wailing temper tantrum tore the mask off an institution we are trained from the first day of law school to respect and revere. Watching a female prosecutor be deputized as a mercenary instrument of male cowardice in order to install Brett Kavanaugh there over credible allegations of sexual assault was chilling. I will never forget what that looked like, the internalized misogyny of voluntarily agreeing to use your law degree and expertise for that.

For that.

Arguing a case before the United States Supreme Court is a career milestone most of us never have the privilege to achieve. It is the court of last resort for our most treasured civil rights. Because it has the ultimate power to interpret the federal constitution, it is quite literally the guardian of our democracy.

And what we saw this week shows us more clearly than ever that our democracy is not safe for anyone but rich, entitled men who went to Yale or Harvard. Of course this has always been true; nothing about Brett Kavanaugh's strident blubbing changed the country overnight.

But something inside of me died this week, professionally speaking. I guess you could call it the last vestige of faith that our third branch of government will be a reliable shelter from the abusive relationship women are now in with our government.

Your institutions will not save you. That's what they say about a democracy in peril. We saw that axiom actualizing in real time.

What am I supposed to tell my summer interns? The young female lawyers I've mentored? I don't have any words for them; for what this completely non-judicious stage five nuclear meltdown means for the future of a court they are supposed to venerate. Whose precedent we rely on to advise our clients and make decisions every day. Whose words we parse and study and apply with rigor.

How many times can I call my Senator, a woman and a lawyer herself? She can't (or won't) save us, either, I don't think.

Practicing law while female has always been an uphill battle. That battle just took on a new and brutal dimension. God only knows what happens next.

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# One Hot Mess

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll feel better about yourself. I promise.

Tuesday, September 25, 2018

## Steff McKee for SCOTUS!

With Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court looking only 99.9% certain, I think we should plan for that .01% contingency and nominate the next best candidate:

Blane from Pretty in Pink.

Actually I checked and as it turns out his name isn't Blane (or Blaine). It's Steff McKee. Blane was the NICE asshole played by Andrew McCarthy, and Steff was the true sociopath played by James Spader. But, close enough.

Bottom line here, Steff has the pedigree America wants and needs in a member of the nation's highest court.

Let's review his qualifications:

- ☒ Rich
- ☒ White
- ☒ Male
- ☒ Preppy
- ☒ Smug
- ☒ Entitled
- ☒ Classist
- ☒ Yooge Bully
- ☒ Binge-drinker
- ☒ Loves house parties
- ☒ 80's hair
- ☒ Unapologetic asshole
- ☒ Sexually assaults shy, nerd-girl types and makes fun of them before and after.

In researching this post, I discovered that I'm not the first person to draw this comparison!

A [hilarious piece](#) by Kimberly Harrington published just yesterday in McSweeney's re-imagines the entire Congressional confirmation process as a re-enactment starring the Pretty in Pink cast decades later, with Brett Kavanaugh as none other than Steff McKee himself. There's no such thing as an original idea, I suppose.

But that doesn't change the fact--and indeed only serves to re-enforce it--that Steff McKee is the next best bet should Kavanaugh go down in flames.

Someone call James Spader because there's a seat on the nation's highest court with his name on it just sitting there for the taking.

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# One Hot Mess

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll feel better about yourself. I promise.

Wednesday, October 31, 2018

## The Apollo 11 Landing of Self-Owns

I wish I'd come up with the title of this blog post myself, but that honor belongs to one of my readers from Cardiff, Wales named Phil Dore (YES, O.H.M. is WORLDWIDE, BITCHES!) And it could not be more perfect, because who Jacob Wohl is, what Jacob Wohl did, and how spectacularly Jacob Wohl failed at doing it is a feat of rocket science that only NASA could actualize.

Obviously, I spend entirely too much time trolling the President of the United States on Twitter (oh hi, 2018!), so I knew who Jacob Wohl was and hated his smarmy ass long before last week when he flew, Icarus-like, too close to the cyber-sun and melted his little alt-right wings trying to take down Robert Mueller. And how did he do that? Welp, by allegedly paying women to make false allegations of sexual assault against Mueller via a website linked to . . . wait for it . . . HIS ACTUAL MOM'S PHONE NUMBER.

This is what passes for good news these days, Fam.

A 20 year-old Alex P. Keaton-meets-Logan Paul-meets your-straight-out-of-central-casting-young-federalist-MAGA-troll-dickweed trying to--and *ACTUALLY BELIEVING*--that he can frame one of the most experienced, serious, respected, ethical, and talented prosecutors in America with bullshit pussy blackmail traceable to his fucking MOM.

Madeleine Aggeler over at The Cut has [a good breakdown](#) of the entire sad, sordid story of the baby-faced hedge fund wunderkind whose main talent and raison d'être is groveling at Trump on Twitter, self-promotion, and falling ass-backwards into a federal criminal investigation because YA DONE FUCKED UP THIS TIME, SON!

One of the things I find most amazing about wee little MAGAs like Jacob Wohl--whose most difficult life experience is a tie between losing Call of Duty to a girl and a dropped WiFi connection in his aforementioned mom's basement--is how little they actually know compared to how much they THINK they know.

Whether you're talking about science, economics, elections, or blackmailing one of the smartest men in America with a slug of Trumpian lies generated in a dark web test tube with a half liter of Mountain Dew by your side, the gulf between those two metrics is wider than the distance between planet earth and the titular moon landing of this blog post.

Indeed, the moon is about 238,900 miles from the broiling little rock we call home. Coincidentally, this is the same distance between the IQ and competency of Jacob Wohl and that of Robert Mueller and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to which Jacob Wohl's seventh grade-level prank has now been referred.

An alternate headline for this scandal is "Bitch Who Thinks He's Playing Three-Dimensional Chess is Actually Playing Candy Land and Just Got Sent Back to Start."

This stunt is legitimately one step above a kid I knew back in the day who slashed the tires of a school bus and thought he wouldn't get caught, because . . . No school bus, no school! GENIUS, RIGHT?! Same deal. Mueller grabs pussy during the MeToo era, Trump stays out of trouble! Like that's the basic logic-level of the jackass we are dealing with here.

So when you look at the moon rise over the horizon tonight, I implore you to gaze up at it and smile as you remember the biggest, roundest, brightest self-own of the week.

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**One Hot Mess AK** @libbybakalar · 17h

You punched WAY above your weight trying to fuck with Mueller. Now you're gonna get your ass arrested. SLOW CLAP. 10-4, Good Buddy!

**Jacob Wohl** @JacobAWohl

EXCLUSIVE DOCUMENTS: Special Counsel and Former FBI Director Robert Mueller Accused of Rape By 'Very Credible Witness ' [thegatewaypundit.com/2018/10/brea...](http://thegatewaypundit.com/2018/10/brea...)

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**Phil Dore** @PhilJDore

Replying to @libbybakalar

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# One Hot Mess

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll feel better about yourself. I promise.

Wednesday, August 14, 2019

## The Domestic Violence-Cruelty Model of Governing

*"Do I regret the angst people have gone through, well, sure. But you could not get to this point, where folks are really talking to us about what really matters in Alaska, what folks really value, if we didn't go through the process of reductions."*

That's how Governor Dunleavy justified his veto of \$444M from the State Operating Budget--an act that has proven not just grossly unpopular, but the catalyst for a recall movement grounded in concrete violations of the law and the constitution (as opposed to the disastrous, sadistic policy choices that many of these vetoes reflect).

But there was something even more sinister in the governor's self-serving back-pedaling-- itself transparently driven by his own political panic rather than an actual change of heart or mind.

It was the tone that he used to deliver this message. It was a tone that many women, at least, have come to dread since Trump was elected. It's a tone in which abusive politics feeds private abuse, and private abuse--along with a culture that promotes and tolerates domestic violence--allows abusive men to assume positions of power.

This was the language that Dunleavy was speaking--to all the Alaskans who had suffered, brutally and needlessly--under the ink of his imperious "red pen."

As he stood in a Head Start classroom, smugly announcing the restoration of funds for early childhood education--just six weeks after he'd vetoed them and six months after he'd tried to zero out the program entirely--he told us that he *had* to do it. He *had* to first threaten the loss of these funds in order to reinstate them.

This is the stock-in-trade language of abusers: "I know I hurt you, but I had to make you understand. You can relax now. You should thank me for stopping. You deserved it."

This is cruelty, full stop. And cruelty is a feature--not a bug--of the Dunleavy administration.

It's cruel to veto funds for early childhood education and senior citizens, causing lapses in services and elders to write their elected officials, quite literally begging for their lives, while experienced staff leave and look elsewhere for work. It's cruel to intentionally incentivize the decimation of education and research, causing professors to flee the state, critical science to go unstudied, and students to wonder if they will be able to get a college education at home.

It was in this context that the governor stridently assumed the podium to announce that, in his magnanimous generosity, he would not *again* veto these funds after the legislature had voted to restore them. But make no mistake: the only reason he was standing there at all was because of the strength and persistence of Alaskans and their legislators, and the looming threat of a recall.

It's **gaslighting**, bullying, and psychological abuse for the governor to claim that we couldn't get to this point if we hadn't endured his punishing red-pen reductions.

The governor, by executive fiat, hurt, scared, and bullied hundreds of thousands of the Alaskans he is charged with protecting. And then he returned to them their stolen morsels, seeking gratitude for his benevolence and claiming foresight in "starting a conversation" that we simply had to have.

"The idea is not to torture anyone or bother folks," he said. "We know that that was part of the outcome, but that was not the intent. Again we were hoping this would be done in the springtime."

This is a classic form of gaslighting: you cannot be offended, because that wasn't the intent, and intention is more important than outcome. Because he didn't "intend" the outcome, we are asked to

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## One Hot Mess: The Domestic Violence-Cruelty Model of Governing

dismiss our own perceptions, feelings, and consequences of the abusive behavior. Also, it's our fault that the abuse dragged on so long.

This not only blames the victim, but it states a lie as though it were a fact: It was clearly and *absolutely* the governor's fault--and his fault alone--that this funding was vetoed in the first place. No one put the "red pen" in his hand. Indeed, he *bragged* about that red pen in earlier PR stunts.

Thousands of Alaskans, as well as experts, testified throughout the session that people needed and relied on these programs and benefits. In response to that testimony, the legislature restored them not once, but twice. Yet here's our governor, obfuscating and denying his role in the process, causing us to doubt our perception of reality.

And if it's one play that Trump's playbook counsels, it's that a lie repeated frequently and loudly enough eventually becomes the truth.

This small retreat toward empathy was hard-won and made possible only through the tenacity of Alaskans fighting for their basic dignity and the social contract. It was a step that the governor, justifiably terrified of a recall, was forced to take not out of kindness or deliberation, but out of political expedience. And here he is telling us there was no other way.

But there *is* another way.

We can control the public narrative by calling this out for the crisis PR stunt that it is. Dunleavy doesn't get a medal for punching a kid in the face, stealing their lunch money, and then giving some of it back when they beg hard enough or the grownups make him do it. And he doesn't get to turn the tables and play the victim when the public resists his abusive administration, either.

When men in power traffic in these tactics, what emerges most clearly is our lack of safety. We see how thin the veil really is between the personal and the political; how familiar this is to so many Alaskan women, particularly indigenous women.

I was reminded of my trip to D.C.--made on personal time at my own expense, by the way-- to beg Senator Murkowski to vote no on appointing a sexual assailant to the United States Supreme Court. Knowing it was futile, we met with Senator Sullivan as well. He brought his Athabaskan wife into the room with him to sit in silent attestation to his "woke" bona fides. He practically tore a rotator cuff patting himself on the back for his role in the vacuous Choose Respect campaign, all while telling a room full of women-- many of whom were themselves sexual assault survivors--that he didn't find Kavanaugh's accusers "credible."

We don't need denials. We need to listen to women. We need to listen to survivors. We need to recognize these abusive tactics in our politicians. Survivors can sense them early on, and it behooves us to capitalize on their wisdom in choosing our elected officials. We need to stop empowering men who abuse their power in this way. And we need to recognize and name this behavior, in whatever form it takes, wherever and whenever it arises.

*The ideas expressed and many of the words used in this post are culled, edited, and adapted from an amalgam of recent conversations on social media and elsewhere with numerous survivors of domestic violence and their advocates. None wished to put their name here.*



Posted by [One Hot Mess](#) at 9:07 PM



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# One Hot Mess

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll feel better about yourself. I promise.

Thursday, August 29, 2019

## Yay! These Parakeets Were an Epic Fail and Source Number 5,462 of Self-Loathing

The thing is, guys, I'm willing to admit when I make a mistake.

And I'm one hundred percent ready to concede that these parakeets (not the actual parakeets in this picture, but Violet and Steele, my "kids" parakeets) were a Very Bad Idea.™ And I say this as someone who's no stranger to bad ideas.

From the woman who brought you other popular bad ideas like "faking throat surgery in kindergarten" (long story), "buying 'shrooms in the projects," and "throwing underwear on stage at a concert in a bar on the Jersey Shore"—comes . . .

PARAKEETS.

The careful reader will note that I put "kids" in quotes above. That's because—and I knew this would happen—they became MY parakeets within a few weeks' time. And that, in turn, is because my good-time Charlie crotch fruit were happy to play with Violet and Steele, but not to actually take care of them. And since I'm not a monster, I don't plan to teach my kids a lesson in "natural consequences" at the expense of these critters' actual lives.

Which is when I really began to see the error of my ways: because Violet and Steele were now my parakeets, and I had to face reality. I didn't do my homework, and I bought a couple of parakeets from PetCo without considering their dubious origins, which a visiting teenager from Switzerland rightly pronounced "unethical." My mind began to spin with guilt and skipped from one neurotic parakeet-related musing to the next:

I just took them from one sad cage to another.  
Maybe this cage is better.  
But it has fewer parakeets.  
And I also unwittingly subsidized and supported the unethical parakeet trade.  
At least they aren't male and female and I don't have to worry about parakeet babies.  
But they are both males, I think?  
And they definitely hate each other.  
People told me they were loud.  
I didn't realize they were *this* loud.  
I had no idea birds could be this loud.  
Maybe I should let them out to fly around.  
But then how will they know to fly back into their cage?  
Millet? Cuttle bones? What's up with cuttle bones, anyway? So random.  
They won't fly back because they are dumb--bird-brained, if you will.  
They will probably fly into a window and die.  
Maybe I should "set them free?"  
But that would be insane.  
They are an invasive species.  
They wouldn't make it five minutes.  
An eagle or a cat would eat them before they could freeze to death.  
They are also filthy.  
How do two such tiny creatures create such a mess?  
I wish I loved them.  
Maybe I should find them a new home?  
But that is such a cop-out.  
I made a commitment to these fuckers.  
They are going to live a miserable life for 20 years and so will I.

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## One Hot Mess: Yay! These Parakeets Were an Epic Fail and Source Number 5,462 of Self-Loathing

UGH WHAT HAVE I DONE.

In the end, my decision to capitulate to my kids' request for parakeets was a bad one, and a metaphor, really, for my multiple life failures. It's also one that I can blog about, much to Isaac's dismay.

"I know what you're going to write on your blog, *MOM*," he told me, rolling his eyes and imitating a high-pitched "mom" voice: "The parakeets are loud and gross and your son doesn't take care of them and blah blah blah."

You got that right, you little turd-monster. Also, you forgot to take the blanket off their cage this morning so I had to do it, and they will get depressed without sunlight.



Posted by [One Hot Mess](#) at 12:36 PM



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